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A Guide For Veterans' Benefits In Illinois

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ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
P.O. Box 19432 208 West Cook Street
Springfield, Illinois 62794

James R. Thompson
Governor

John W. Johnston
Director

STATE BENEFITS

AUTOMOBILES

Disabled Veterans License Plates. A disabled veteran who has a service-connected disability incurred during military service, and whose disability entitled that veteran to an automobile grant from the federal government, **or** who has a total service-connected disability may be issued one special license, without charge, for a motor vehicle of the first division or the second division (small trucks and vans weighing 8,000 pounds or less) owned by the veteran.

Free Parking for Disabled Veterans. Vehicles bearing special registration plates for disabled veterans are exempt from any statute or ordinance imposing time limitations on parking in business districts or other facilities, except for where parking is prohibited, pursuant to Illinois Revised Statutes, Ch. 95½, Par. 11-1301.1.

SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES

Upon establishing proof of eligibility to entitlement, the following special registration plates are available without fee: EX-POW and Congressional Medal of Honor for a motor vehicle of the first or second division. Purple Heart registration plates, Armed Forces Reserves and National Guard registration plates are available for vehicles of the first or second division upon establishing proof of eligibility and payment of a registration fee.

BONUS PAYMENTS

World War II. A bonus of \$10 per month for domestic service and \$15 per month for foreign service is payable to Illinois residents who served on active duty from September 16, 1940, and prior to September 3, 1945, and received an honorable discharge. Survivors are entitled to a benefit of \$900, if the veteran's death was service connected and within the period specified.

Korean Conflict Bonus. A \$100 bonus is payable for service from June 27, 1950, and prior to July 27, 1953, if the veteran received the Korean Service Medal, was honorably discharged, and was a resident of Illinois 12 months before entering service. Survivors are eligible to receive \$1,000 if the veteran's death was service connected and within the period specified.

Vietnam Conflict Bonus. A \$100 bonus is payable for service from January 1, 1961, and prior to March 28, 1973, to include the dates of April 29 and 30, 1975 (Operation Frequent Wind — the evacuation of all Americans from Siagon). The claimant must have been an Illinois resident for at least 12 months immediately prior to entering service, and a recipient of the Vietnam Service Medal or Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for Vietnam. Survivors are entitled, if veteran's death is service connected, or the direct result of service-connected disabilities incurred in the period specified, to be paid \$1,000.

POW Compensation. Persons on active duty with the Armed Forces of the United States or employed by the United States Government on, or after, January 1, 1961, who were residents of Illinois 12 months prior to entry, and who were taken and held prisoner by hostile forces in Southeast Asia, are entitled to \$50 for each month or portion thereof while being held captive.

Survivors' Compensation. A \$1,000 bonus is payable to survivors of certain persons killed by terrorist acts or hostile activities during performance of military service in periods not recognized as wartime or by United States campaign or service medals. Residency of 1 year in Illinois prior to entering military service is required.

BURIAL BENEFITS

Cartage and Erection Fees. When a headstone or marker has been furnished by the federal government, the ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS shall pay the allowable reimbursement amount for the setting of such marker within Illinois.

Graves Registration. The ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS shall maintain a card file Roll of Honor of all veterans buried in the State of Illinois. Every person, firm or corporation owning or controlling any cemetery or burial place in this State is required to keep a permanent record of the burial of each U.S. war veteran or memorial marker erected for this purpose.

Indigent Veterans. Each county board shall designate some suitable person or persons who shall cause to be buried the body of any honorably discharged veteran, or their mothers, fathers, spouse or surviving spouse, or minor children without having sufficient means to defray the funeral expenses. The expense of such burial shall not exceed the sum of \$600, and such burial shall not be made in ground used exclusively for the burial of the pauper dead.

EDUCATION

Educational Opportunities For Children (10-18 Yrs.). Financial aid is provided annually to each child between the ages of 10 and 18 years of a veteran who died or became totally disabled as a result of service in the in the Armed Forces during World War I or II, the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts or beginning February 1, 1955, until such individuals are no longer eligible for induction under the Universal Military Training and Service Act. Attendance means a state educational institution of elementary grade, a high school or business college, vocational training school or other educational institution.

MIA/POW Scholarship. The dependents of a veteran who has been declared by the Department of Defense or Veterans Administration to be a prisoner of war; missing-in-action; to have died as the result of a service-connected disability; or be permanently disabled from service-connected causes with 100% disability; and, who was an Illinois resident or was an Illinois resident within six (6) months of entering service may be eligible for the scholarship. An eligible dependent is entitled to full payment of tuition and certain fees to any state supported Illinois institution of higher learning consisting of the equivalent of four (4) calendar years of full-time enrollment including summer terms (i.e., 120 points)

State Approving Agency. Approves training for veterans in the areas of higher education, apprenticeship training, vocational training, and on the job training.

Veterans' Scholarship. The Illinois Veterans' Scholarship covers In-State and In-District tuition and certain fees at any state-controlled college, university, or community college in Illinois. This scholarship is granted to any veteran who received a discharge under honorable conditions; who was an Illinois resident six (6) months prior to entering the service and claimed residency six (6) months after separation; or who served at least one (1) year after, or served for less than one (1) year prior to August 11, 1967. Applications and information for the scholarship may be obtained from the Illinois State Scholarship Commission, 106 Wilmot Rd., Deerfield, 60015.

Army National Guard Scholarship. Any enlisted person or Lieutenant or Captain with at least one year service in the Illinois Army National Guard may participate. Available for eight (8) semesters or twelve (12) quarters of full-time or part-time undergraduate study or graduate study at any Illinois state-controlled university or community college. Recipient is entitled to payment of tuition and certain fees. Applications and information on the scholarship may be obtained from the Illinois State Scholarship Commission.

Honorary Scholarships. Each county in the state shall be entitled, annually, to one honorary scholarship in the University of Illinois, for the benefit of children of veterans of WW I, WW II, Korean and Vietnam Conflict periods with preference being given to the children of deceased and disabled veterans. Such children shall be entitled to receive, without charge for tuition, instruction in any or all departments of the University for a term of at least 4 consecutive years. Details may be obtained from the Financial Aids Office of the University. (Illinois Revised Statutes, Ch. 144, Par. 30)

EMPLOYMENT

State Government: Employment Preference. Provisions for granting of appropriate preference in entrance examinations to former members of the Armed Forces who served in times of hostilities. The preference shall be five (5) points for non-disabled persons, and ten (10) points for persons receiving compensation from the Veterans Administration. A spouse, unmarried surviving spouse, and certain parents may also be given a ten (10) point preference under conditions where the veteran is unable to qualify for employment because of death or disability.

Appointment Preference. For multiple and single appointments made from open competitive eligibility lists, veterans eligible in each grade category must be afforded an opportunity for interview and must be afforded employment consideration **before** any non-veteran eligible in the same grade category are interviewed or considered. When multiple appointments are made from a single eligibility listing, 50% of the vacancies shall be filled with eligible veterans. Agencies may bypass veterans for employment only when a non-veteran eligible possesses superior attributes over the veteran eligible to perform the duties and functions of the vacant position. A veteran eligible who is not selected for appointment has a right to request and receive a written explanation of the reasons why he or she was not selected.

HOUSING

Housing Tax Exemption. This exemption is allowed on the assessed value of real property for which federal funds have

been used for the purchase or construction of specially adapted housing for as long as the veteran, or the spouse, or unmarried surviving spouse resides on the property.

Specially Adapted Housing. Assistance is provided for service-connected disabled veterans for the purpose of acquiring and remodeling suitable dwelling units with special fixtures or moveable facilities made necessary by the veteran's permanent and total service-connected disabilities.

Special Adaption Housing. This assistance is available for veterans with visual impairment or loss, or loss of use, of both hands for the purpose of remodeling a dwelling to meet their disability requirements. The assistance under this grant is for those veterans whose service-connected disabilities are not totally disabling.

Veterans' Home (Quincy). Nursing and domiciliary care shall be provided to any person with military service of one (1) day or more during WW I, WW II, the Korean or Vietnam Conflicts, or during any period of time now, or in the future, recognized by the Veterans Administration as a period of war. The veteran must either have been an Illinois resident upon entry into the service, or have resided in the State of Illinois for one (1) year preceding application for admittance into the home. Peacetime veterans with 1 year of honorable military service may be eligible for domiciliary care at the home. Other qualifying conditions, as required, must be met. The spouse, or surviving spouse, may also qualify for admittance.

Veterans' Home (Manteno). This 300 bed facility provides for skilled nursing care to veterans with military service of one (1) day or more during WW I, WW II, the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts, or during any period of time now, or in the future, recognized by the Veterans Administration as a period of war. The veteran must either have been an Illinois resident upon entry into the service, or have resided in the State of Illinois for one (1) year preceding application for admittance into the home. Other qualifying conditions, as required, must be met and admittance is granted to veterans requiring nursing care only.

PERMITS

Camping & Admission Fees. Provides for the exemption of camping and admission fees for certain disabled persons and former prisoners of war who are Illinois residents and wish to camp in parks under the control of the Illinois Department of Conservation. Documentation to establish proof of disability, prisoner of war and veteran status is required.

Hunting and Fishing Privileges. Fishing and hunting licenses are not required for disabled veterans who are Illinois residents and receiving 10% or greater service-connected compensation, or total disability pension benefits. This exemption does not apply to special permits, stamps, or licenses which may be required by the Department of Conservation.

SCHOLARSHIP

See Education.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Notary Service. Free Notary Service will be provided to Illinois veteran clients.

Public Records. Certified copies of public records will be furnished on first request without charge. Additional requests for certified copies of public records or for public records outside of the State may require a fee.

State Fair. Honorably discharged veterans and their families shall be admitted free, when they properly identify themselves, on the day set aside for Veterans' Day. Veterans' Day includes a day-long program of drum corps, drill teams, and color guard competition, ending with a grand finale of all units.

Veterans Discharge Certificate. The Copy 6 of the DD 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, for veterans released from military service after October 1, 1979, may be on permanent file with this agency. Veterans, who at the time of discharge requested this copy to be sent to the Director of Veterans' Affairs, can request a copy of their DD 214, Copy 6, for establishing eligibility for benefits.



FEDERAL BENEFITS

BURIAL BENEFITS

Certain benefits are available to assist with the burial expenses and plot or interment allowance of deceased veterans. Eligibility is established if the veteran was entitled at the time of death to pension or compensation (or but for the receipt of military retired pay would have been entitled to compensation). Eligibility is also established if the veteran died while hospitalized or domiciled in a VA facility or other facility at VA expense.

A flag of the United States may be furnished by the VA to drape the casket of a deceased veteran discharged under other than dishonorable conditions. Flags are available from most funeral homes or local Post Offices.

NATIONAL CEMETERY BURIAL

Veterans of all wars, the Korean Conflict period, the Vietnam era, or peacetime service, and certain members of their families, are eligible. Arlington National Cemetery has certain qualifying conditions.

GRAVE MARKER OR HEADSTONE

The VA will furnish a headstone or marker without charge for the unmarked grave of a veteran who was separated from military service under conditions other than dishonorable or a person who died while on active duty. A Medal of Honor recipient is entitled to a headstone or marker regardless of the character of discharge for the last period of service. The VA may pay an amount not to exceed the average actual cost of a government marker as partial reimbursement for the cost incurred by the person acquiring a non-government marker for placement in a cemetery other than a national cemetery.

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COMPENSATION

Available to veterans of all wartime or peacetime service eras, who are discharged by injury or disease incurred in or aggravated by active service in the line of duty and released or discharged under honorable conditions.

COMPENSATION FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DEATHS BEFORE JANUARY 1, 1957

Amounts payable to an eligible surviving spouse, children, or dependent parents, are not affected by deceased veteran's rank or length of service.

DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DEATHS ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 1957

For eligible dependents of deceased servicemen of all wartime or peacetime service eras.

PENSION FOR NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES

A veteran with 90 or more days of wartime service, or separated from such service for a service-connected disability and became permanently and totally disabled from reasons not traceable to service or are over 65 may be eligible for a pension. Income limitations apply.

PENSION FOR NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED DEATHS

For surviving spouse and children of veterans who served in wartime who died from non-service-connected conditions and who meet income and other qualifying conditions.

FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE PREFERENCE

Veterans separated under honorable conditions from any war-time period, and certain dependents, shall be given preferential consideration in training programs, job retention and restoration and appointments. Disabled veterans will be given first consideration.

RE-EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Restoration by prior employer to the position the veteran would have held had he/she not been in service. Length of service shall not exceed four years unless at the request and convenience of the federal government, but no longer than five years maximum. Satisfactory completion of active duty and have a certificate to that effect is required. Application must be made within ninety days after completion of military service.

VA HOME LOANS

Available to veterans, and eligible surviving spouse, of WW II, the Korean Conflict period, the post-Korean period, and the Vietnam era, and to servicemen still on active duty with at least two years of active duty.

HOSPITALIZATION — VA HOSPITALS

First priority to veterans for treatment of service-connected disabilities, and veterans who have a service-connected disability

needing treatment for a disability not related to the service-connected condition. Veterans with wartime service may be admitted for treatment of a non-service-connected condition. Emergency conditions shall be given immediate consideration. Co-payments for treatment may be required.

OUTPATIENT MEDICAL CARE

Available to veterans discharged or retired under conditions other than dishonorable and in need of treatment for a disability incurred in or aggravated by military service.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

For the spouse, surviving spouse, and children of veterans whose death or permanent total disability was service-connected.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

For disabled veterans of WW II, the Korean Conflict period, the Vietnam era, and certain peacetime veterans. The benefit is complex and any disabled veteran should investigate entitlement and benefits derived from this program.

EDUCATION — GI BILL

Available to veterans who served for more than 180 days, and who were released under conditions other than dishonorable. Eligibility expires ten (10) years following date of last separation. All benefits end December 31, 1989.

EDUCATION — VEAP

Available to veterans who entered on active duty after December 31, 1976, who served for more than 180 days and voluntarily participated in the contributory education assistance program. Eligibility expires ten (10) years after discharge or release from active duty.

EDUCATION — NEW GI BILL

Establishes a program of education benefits for individuals entering military service from July 1, 1985 through June 30, 1988. Includes an educational entitlement program for selected reserve members who met certain requirements. Educational assistance is payable only for pursuit of undergraduate degree and non-college degree programs at institutions of higher learning.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING ALL BENEFITS DUE YOU OR YOUR DEPENDENTS, CONTACT A LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS OR CALL 217/782-6641 FOR AN OFFICE LOCATED NEAR YOU.

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